

# The Classical Bulletin

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## Horace's Theory of Poetry

The most recent historian of ancient criticism has said that Horace was not deeply concerned with the nature of poetry, and that, wanting speculative ability, he did not and could not penetrate to first principles as Aristotle before him had done; for "though he had given much thought to matters of poetry, he had never really succeeded in exploring its depths."<sup>1</sup> Horace was no Aristotle, and he was possibly not so Aristotelian as some critics have made him. But there are things in Aristotle, too, for which we wish we could have an explanation. We are all in peril if omissions are used as evidence of lack of principle or speculative ability. Whether Horace explored depths is another question, of course, and one which what he said, rather than what he failed to say, will determine; but it is possible, I think, to gather from his work evidence of interest in the nature of poetry, and a theory which reaches "first principles."

This theory is chiefly to be drawn from the two *Epistles* of Book II (i, to Augustus; ii, to Florus) and the *Epistle to the Pisos*. The latter, the *Ars Poetica*, is Horace's critical piece *par excellence*. It contains the statement of his essential theory. The other two epistles serve to illuminate it in opposite ways. The one addressed to Augustus is concerned with the social aspects of literature, the relation of poetry to political, moral, and religious life; the aspects of literature, precisely, which might be expected to interest the director of the government and the god to whom the epistle is addressed. To Florus the poet writes a more private letter, in which literature, where it is discussed, is treated from a position so individual as to preclude large social questions.

O. L. Richmond<sup>2</sup> has shown that the *Epistle to Florus* cannot have been written before 15 B. C. The *Epistle to Augustus* was written about 13 B. C. The date of the *Ars Poetica* is much more difficult to settle. It was formerly agreed that it belonged to the last years of the poet's life (circa 10-8 B. C.); but of late this has been contested.<sup>3</sup> Several scholars<sup>4</sup> now hold that the work was composed about 20 B. C. (a date first suggested by Reenen in 1806) or shortly after. Bentley's date, 15 B. C., is approved by Rostagni,<sup>5</sup> and it is probably the one which Villeneuve also prefers.<sup>6</sup> Jefferson Elmore<sup>7</sup> has brought these conjectures to a climax of variety by offering some arguments for 28-27 B. C.; but, though an early date is in many ways attractive, this one can hardly be accepted at present, unless we apply to dating the classical maxim of Bentley upon textual readings. Any year after 13, however,

seems as unlikely as any before 23. In the decade between those two dates the *Ars Poetica* was probably written; and I think nothing justifies excluding any one of the ten intervening years from the probabilities.<sup>8</sup> Since, however, a sensitive reading of the *Ars Poetica* and the *Epistles* of Book II is likely to suggest that the latter are separated from the former by a relatively long period of time, I believe the early years of the decade have a certain right to preference. Those who put the composition of the *Ars Poetica* about the year 20 B. C. are probably right.

In this work, says Porphyrio, Horace *concessit praecepta Neoptolemi* τοῦ Πραγματοῦ *de arte poetica*, *non quidem omnia, sed eminentissima*; and it is not possible to-day to doubt the truth of Porphyrio's statement.<sup>9</sup> Neoptolemus of Parium seems to have lived about 300 B. C. His doctrines, apparently in general Peripatetic, probably reached Horace through a later Hellenistic intermediary.<sup>10</sup> Horace's fidelity to any single source was, however, perhaps not so uniform as Rostagni, for example, has represented it as being. The mind of Horace was of the eclectic kind, and, though there is a unity in his aesthetic thought, it is possible to see in his literary epistles, as in the rest of his work, variety of derivation. More specifically, I think there is more of the Epicurean influence, perhaps of Philodemus, but in any case of the tradition to which Philodemus belonged, than Rostagni has allowed. And if the tradition of Dionysius of Halicarnassus was a rhetorical one distinct in many respects from the Aristotelian,<sup>11</sup> there is another current in Horace's theory, created perhaps by the personal influence of Dionysius himself.<sup>12</sup> It is not, however, my purpose in this paper to make an apportionment of Horace's debts, but to outline his general theory of poetry.

Poetry, Horace said, is a *parva res*.<sup>13</sup> A modern poet and critic has written, "Poetry is a superior amusement."<sup>14</sup> With him Horace would have agreed, for his word *nugari*<sup>15</sup> can be translated "amuse," and in a list of amusements to which he applies it we find, with athletic games, races, bric-à-brac, sculpture and painting, *tragedies* also included.<sup>16</sup> The significance of this particularisation may easily escape one who forgets the supreme position universally accorded to the drama in ancient theory, a position moreover explicitly acknowledged by Horace, who devotes so large a part of the *Ars Poetica* to dramatic theory.<sup>17</sup> The very highest literary form is for Horace a "superior amusement." Poetry is a kind of toy (*Ep. I, i, 10, uersus et cetera ludicra*) with which some men play. The habit of writing verses is an *error*, an aberration, and a *levis insania*, a mild insanity (*Ep. II, i, 118*). This is humor,

of course, not anticipation of Freud; but it is not to be read as genuine irony. Poetry is not for Horace the lofty thing he has been credited with believing it. It is a *parua res*. And it is not at all essential to the good life, however perfect it be, any more than the best oil or the sweetest honey at a dinner—*poterat duci quia cena sine istis*. Moreover, if poetry threatens to impede a man's progress toward the good, or to interrupt his study of ethical philosophy, he will do well to abandon it. The proper study of mankind is morality, not poetry.<sup>18</sup>

Nevertheless, poetry has its own perfections. Horace will explain, with due subordination to ultimate ends

hic error tamen et levis haec insania quantas  
virtutes habeat . . .

The first and most fundamental of these is that poetry gives joy to the mind. To give joy to the mind is the immediate end of poetry. Horace's most radical statement of the nature of poetry is contained, not in the famous line 333 of the *Ars Poetica*, but in line 377, where we read that a poem is a thing *animis natum inuentumque . . . iuuandis*. Without this joy no poem can be justified (366-378); and it is only perfect poems that give such joy. And it is precisely because Horace saw in this joy of the mind the only really immediate end of poetry, the 'final cause' which is one of the determinants of its essential nature, that he could honestly view poems as *nugae*, or even as *ludicra*, trifles and toys. For this joy is something man can live without; it is to life what the oil and the honey are to the dinner, an exquisite addition if it be of the highest kind, but dispensable. To devote oneself to it, to create it or to seek it or to experience it, is *nugari*.

There is, nevertheless, in the word which Horace uses in this important statement an implication that, if indeed poetry is an amusement, it is yet a truly "serious amusement." *Iuuare* has a strange semantic history. In Horace's own time, and in fact in his own work, it has often the meaning *be good for*; and its most proper specific use seems to have been actually a medical one.<sup>19</sup> We know the unequivocal meaning never lost by its compound, *adiuuare*. *Prodesse*, then, is one of its synonyms. But ("quia," says Forcellini, "quae prosunt eadem fere voluptati sunt") it has also the meaning, apparently alien from this,<sup>20</sup> of *giving delight or joy*; and it is the latter meaning, certainly, which *iuuandis* has in line 377 of the *Ars Poetica*.<sup>21</sup> Of the two senses the one of profiting or helping is unquestionably the original one, and the process by which the word acquired its other meaning must have been the one so shortly explained by Forcellini. What I want to note is that, as always happens in such cases, the secondary meaning preserved a connotation of the original meaning; it implied advantage, benefit, improvement, whether it was used of physical pleasure or of the pleasure of the mind. This is clear, among other indications, from its medical use in the physical sense; and the word is never used of pleasure, either physical or mental, which is detrimental to the nature of the subject. Horace was, as every one knows, precise

in diction. It is not pedantic, then, to see in his use of *iuuare* in this line an implication of what we should call, or used to call, "noble" pleasure; though *animis iuuandis* has none of the priggish connotation of the English *improving one's mind*, to which, if that connotation were absent, it might be a genuine parallel.

That *iuuare* was used of physical as well as of mental delight we know. Cicero tells us this, moreover, in a passage full of significance (*De finibus*, II, 13-14):

. . . uoluptas dicitur etiam in animo . . . non dicitur laetitia nec gaudium in corpore. In eo autem uoluptas omnium latine loquentium more ponitur, cum percipitur ea quae sensum aliquem moueat iucunditas. Hanc quoque iucunditatem, si uis, transfer in animum; iuuare enim in utroque dicitur, ex eoque iucundum . . .

*Animis* in line 377, then, is not redundant; it makes specific a verb capable of wider application. *Iuuare* alone connotes worthy pleasure; but the pleasure of poetry, which is of this worthy kind, is a pleasure of the intelligence. The phrase involves, therefore, a denial of that view, common in the Hellenistic age, and important enough in Horace's time, to demand active opposition from Philodemus, that the delight afforded by poetry was a purely sensuous one; and it is not improbable that Horace meant, in this whole passage (366-384), that the poets he condemns as *mediocres* merited that epithet by writing for the ear rather than for the full intelligence.<sup>22</sup>

(To be concluded)

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#### NOTES

1. J. W. H. Atkins, *Literary Criticism in Antiquity*; Cambridge 1934; II 75.99.
2. *Sexti Properti quae supersunt opera*; Cantab., 1928; 52.
3. This dating is accepted, however, by T. Frank, *Catullus and Horace*; 260; and by Atkins; o. c. II 69.
4. O. Immisch, *Horazens Epistel über die Dichtkunst*; Leipzig 1932; 1-8.
5. A. Rostagni, *Arte poetica di Orazio*; Torino 1930; xv-xix.
6. F. Villeneuve, *Horace: Épitres*; Paris 1934; 195.
7. "A New Dating of Horace's *De arte poetica*." *Classical Philology*, xxx, 1 ff. Cf. Rostagni's review of this article in *Rivista di filologia*, N. S., xiii, 117-118.
8. The reference to a "lyrical interval" which has been drawn from line 306, *nil scribens ipse*, is, I, think, unwarranted. *Nil* is here pure irony, after *non alius faceret meliora poemata; verum nil tanti est* (303-4), and the thought of 306 is repetition of that of lines 304-5, *Ergo . . . secandi*, which, following immediately upon the mock-desperate retort, *nil tanti est*, shares its humor and irony. So I see in this no parallel with e. g. *Epp.* I 1.10; though it is possible that the latter, and other like passages, are also not so serious as they have seemed.
9. See Michaelis' *Sollemnitas Natalicia* . . . ; Killae 1857, p. 16. Since 1857, however,—more properly since 1905, the date of E. Norden's "Die Komposition und Litteraturgattung der Horazischen *Ep. ad Pisones*" (*Hermes* xl, 481 ff.)—much light has been turned upon the sources of the A.P., though there remains smoke to be cleared. The chief works to be consulted are C. Jensen, *Philodemus über die Gedichte. Fünftes Buch*, Berlin 1923; A. Rostagni, o. c., and O. Immisch, o. c.
10. Rostagni believes that Philodemus of Gadara (30 B. C.) introduced Horace to the older theorist; Immisch thinks that Philodemus himself knew Neoptolemus only indirectly.
11. On Dionysius' Aristotelian debts, see Kroll, *Rheinisches Museum*, lxi; 92 ff.
12. Elmore, o. c., promises a discussion of the relation of the *Ars Poetica* to Dionysius' *De comp. verb.*, from which, he thinks, "Horace obtained the cue for the scheme of his poem."
13. *Epp.* II i.125. Note that this statement is in his *social* epistle.
14. T. S. Eliot, *The Sacred Wood*; 1928; vii. "I call it an amusement . . . not because that is a true definition, but because if you call it anything else, you are likely to call it something still more

false." 15. *Epp.* II i.93; cf. II ii.141. 16. *Epp.* II i.93-98 17. On the place of drama and the reasons for Horace's disproportionate emphasis, see the whole of section iv of Rostagni's introduction, *o. c.*, xli ff. 18. *Epp.* II ii.141-4, and *passim*. 19. See Forcellini II.974. 20. *Iuuare* is often contrasted with *prodesse* (cf. Seneca *Ep. mor.*, xviii 3, 106), or distinguished from it as in Cicero *de fin.* II 5. 21. Ben Jonson, however, has: "So any Poem fancy'd, or forth-brought / To bettering of the mind of man in ought." See Blakeney, *Horace on the Art of Poetry*, 127. Jonson's classical scholarship has, I think, been overrated. 22. This is the more probable in that he continues at once "Tu nihil inuita dices faciesue *Minerua*; id tibi *iudicium* est, ea *mens*." In *Epp.* II i.98, of tragedy, Horace uses *gauisa*, one of the words suited only to mental pleasure; this is a context which identifies its enjoyment with *nugari*. Cf. *suspendit . . . mentem*, of the plastic arts, *ib.* 97, and *leuantes . . . et ipsum animum*, *ib.* 140/1 (where *ipsum* is the word to be noted). *Placebit* in *A.P.* 365 is one of the words capable of either physical or mental use; but the processes involved in the passage of which it is part are intellectual (note esp. 364), and *deciens repetita* enforces an intellectual connotation. In passing, the relation of these passages to Longinus should be noted; the Longinian test of value is implicit in *A.P.* 365, and explicit in 345-6. *Suspendere mentem* has a suggestion of *ἐκκλῆξις*.

### The New Pedagogy and the Old Learning

The main lines of this article were already running in my head, and indeed I had already put a tentative pen to stray scraps of paper when THE CLASSICAL BULLETIN for October, 1935, reached me, with its leading article entitled "The Old Is Better." Although, living as I do in the antipodes (and therefore, I hope, deserving of pardon for my ignorance), I am more than a little at sea as to the distinction between a freshman and a sophomore, a grade-school, a grammar school and a high-school, with the main trend of the author's thought I find myself in complete agreement. When, farther on in the same issue, I find the editor explicitly asking for comment on these and kindred matters, I am moved to pen this note. I make no pretence to being exhaustive; I merely wish to air an idea over which I have been ruminating for a very considerable time.

There is a tendency in much modern teaching which I view with profound misgiving. I mean the tendency to make things as easy as possible for the pupil. I have no sooner written so much than I feel that I am already shouted down as a reactionary, as one who is out of sympathy with modern pedagogical methods, as one who knows nothing about psychology, as one who wishes to revert to the old, bad ways.

It is true that old ways are being rejected with a surprising *insouciance*, amounting at times to a contempt that hardly shrinks from asserting that the newer a thing or a method is, the better it is. It is true that there are to be found many teachers who cherish rosy hopes of great reforms in the realm of pedagogy, the avowed purpose of these reforms being to make the rough ways plain, to eliminate drudgery, to get rid of distasteful and unappetizing tasks, in short to falsify the saying of an older sage that "knowledge maketh a bloody entrance."

Nevertheless we cannot accept without question the above-mentioned principle, rarely perhaps put in so many words, but frequently implied, that the newer a

thing is, the better it is. It may perhaps be true about automobiles—*viderint sapientiores*—but there are few spheres in which the principle could be accepted without qualification and reserve. In the sphere of educational methods it has perhaps less truth than in most others.

We may experiment. But no experiment is likely to be fruitful unless based upon and guided by the experience of the past. What has experience shown? Surely this, that success in the study of the classics, as in any other sphere, is the outcome of downright hard work. And those very prophets of a new age who hope to change what they call the old bad ways have achieved whatever competence they possess not, in most cases, by the brilliant intuitions of genius, not because they enjoyed in their early years the blessings of the new pedagogic, but because to some natural aptitude they added the severe discipline of constant and concentrated application. There is no other substitute for genius than hard work: *labor omnia vincit improbus*; and we must not let ourselves be deceived by a spate of modern psychological jargon into thinking that effort can be dispensed with.

The rising generation, it is true, is in many cases not fond of hard work. But it is not the part of the true educator to pamper idleness and thus assist in training a spineless generation, but rather to react vigorously by insisting on hard work and severe mental discipline. Sometimes I fear that we are blaming the rising generation for a vice we have ourselves engendered. If we do not expect and demand hard work of our pupils, it is quite certain that they will not put forth any great mental effort; they will be quite satisfied to be spoon-fed if we are so complaisant as to do it for them. But if they are to develop in intellect and in character, they must be made to shift for themselves to a far greater extent. Today, on the contrary, the whole tendency seems to be towards saving the pupils trouble. The great classical scholars of the past were trained on methods which many of our moderns abhor. Yet they raised their *monumentum aere perennius*, and we have yet to see comparable results produced by the vaunted modern methods.

It is true that effort must be well directed. It is in that, and above all in the power of stimulating effort, that the good teacher proves himself. But effort there must be. It is, I am convinced, a fatal mistake to think that Latin or Greek can be learned, or any real benefit derived from their study, without taking the trouble to master the minutiae of accidence or the subtleties of syntax, without worrying over the parts of the Latin verb or the paradigm of the Greek.

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Much of the strength of Greek literature depends on its realism—not realism in the vulgar sense of stressing the ugly and familiar side of things, but in its true sense of creating something recognizably rooted in life.  
—C. M. Bowra.



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## Editorial

In connection with the discussions of the so-called *newer* methods of teaching Latin which have lately become so popular, certain writers seem to be laboring under various false impressions about both the theory and practice of teachers who still follow in a general way the traditional grammar-translation method in their teaching. There are many old-school teachers who are by no means blind worshippers of a rigid tradition. Indeed, it is hard to conceive how any successful and live teacher could be such. Flexibility and adaptability to changing circumstances are the very soul of good teaching technique, and proponents of the newer methods are often too ready to suppose that, having dubbed the older way the "grammar-translation" method, they have a right to assume that the upholders of that method are wooden and unintelligent in their use of it; that they make the study of grammar an end in itself, instead of a means to the understanding of the language; that they never make use of comprehension tests; that they proceed to the interpretation of classical writers solely by means of literal translation into the vernacular; that they never get their classes beyond the stage of parsing and analysing a very small amount of matter; that they require little or no sight translation; and so on. Now, every good teacher of Latin who uses the old method knows that these assumptions are not true. They may be true of incompetent teachers; but incompetent teachers are no just criterion to judge a method by; and if the newer methods should ever come to prevail generally in the schools, incompetent teachers would prove as wooden in their application of them, as they now are in the application of the old methods.

Some enthusiasts for the new methods would do away with all grammatical terms, such as "subject,"

"object," "noun," "verb," and substitute for them "the person or thing about which something is affirmed," "the person or thing to which the action is directed," etc. But what advantage is there in this procedure other than the fact that it stresses the functions of these various grammatical categories? Has not every intelligent teacher always taught his classes that "subject" and "object" mean precisely this? And has not his only reason for using the terms "subject" and "object" been, that it is simpler and easier to use convenient single terms rather than perpetually repeat long definitions? Or is it too much to expect of modern youth that they learn at school to call a "self-propelling vehicle" an "automobile," or a "building in which God is worshipped" a "church," or a "place where instruction is carried on" a "school"?

And why should there be such serious opposition to translation? Does any self-respecting teacher accept as translation a crude, literal, and unidiomatic version of an ancient author? And is not fairly accurate translation or paraphrase the simplest and most satisfactory ordinary way of testing comprehension? The wise teacher knows that it is not the only way, and that it is subject to abuse through the use of "ponies" and mechanical memorization. But that will merely put him on his guard against using it exclusively or unintelligently as a test of comprehension. But why should he abandon it altogether, when it is so convenient and satisfactory if properly used? It is true that adequate translation from Latin into English, especially in the case of great literature, is too much to expect from immature minds struggling with the acquisition of both languages. Certainly, such translation cannot be reasonably demanded every day and in the case of long assignments, especially from beginners. But what successful teacher of the old school does demand it every day? Many habitually demand rather a paraphrase than an adequate translation, or an account in the student's own words of the thought-content of a passage. The precise form in which comprehension tests are now often cast by exponents of the newer methods has advantages, but it also has decided disadvantages, just as rigid adherence to the translation method has.

To sum up. The Latinists of the new school have convinced us, in a way perhaps not hitherto achieved, of the limitations and pitfalls of the older methods; they have not convinced us that the older methods can be safely discarded. The wise teacher will retain what is good in the old, modify his practice in the light of recent discussions, and introduce judiciously, if he has not done so long since, what seems good in the "new" technique. He will stress the functional character of etymology and syntax, if his teaching of these in the past has been too formal. He will not overemphasize syntax, especially in the more advanced stages of Latin study. He will insist more on comprehension than on literal translation. He will not pursue in his work a false thoroughness, which would limit unduly the quantity of reading to be accomplished. He will frequently demand an account of unseen matter, especially in examinations. But if he has had considerable experience in the Latin classroom, he will not throw grammar

overboard, nor nurture the delusion that high-school students can be taught to understand classical Latin at sight in two years' time, least of all without the study of grammar.

It is with keen regret that THE CLASSICAL BULLETIN notes the death, on November 13, 1935, at Madison, Wisconsin, of Grant Showerman, for thirty-five years professor of classics at the University of Wisconsin. To a deep and scholarly insight Professor Showerman joined an ease and felicity of style all too rare in philological writings. The world of classical scholarship and the larger world of cultured interest will remember him for his *Horace and His Influence* in the "Our Debt" series, and for his *Eternal Rome, Rome and the Romans*, and *Monuments and Men of Ancient Rome*, the last of which appeared just shortly before his death. His long career at the University of Wisconsin and his many years as administrator of the Summer Session of the American Academy at Rome brought him numberless acquaintances and friends. To them, and almost equally to those who knew him only by reputation, his death is a deep bereavement.

In May, 1934, the Cross and Scroll Club of Holy Cross College (Worcester, Mass.), as a first instalment of the bimillennial celebrations in honor of Horace, sponsored a contest, which awarded the Kimball Purse to the Holy Cross student submitting the best original composition celebrating the poet. In January, 1935, the contest was brought to a close, and *Exegi Monumentum*, a dramatic representation of the life of Horace, written by John T. Parpal, '37, of Binghampton, N. Y., won the prize. This play, written in English, also was accorded honorable mention in the contest sponsored by the National Committee on the Horatian Bimillennium. Five acts, containing eleven scenes, were written in the Shakespearian variation of blank verse for the weightier, and prose for the lighter, scenes. Original translations of the many popular Odes were scattered throughout the play, and it concludes with the ever lovable *Exegi monumentum*, from which the drama derives its name. The play was then presented before an audience of students and their friends on December the twelfth. For fuller details, see the past issues of the *Tomahawk*, the Holy Cross College weekly.

### The Christmas Classical Meetings

The élite of American classical, archaeological, and linguistic scholarship were well represented in the more than five hundred persons registered at the joint Christmas convention of the American Philological Association, the Archaeological Institute of America, and the Linguistic Society of America, meeting at Hotel Astor, Times Square, New York City, December 26, 27, and 28. The attendance established a record in the history of the societies. No little tribute must be paid to the Local Committee, headed by Professor Wil-

bert Lester Carr, for its far-seeing thoughtfulness that resulted in well-planned accommodations for the visitors.

All sessions were conveniently held on the eighth floor of Hotel Astor, the three societies meeting individually or in joint gatherings. Apart from committee meetings and the like, there were five general sessions. The first of these, with the three societies convening separately, was held on the afternoon of Thursday, December 26. In the evening there was a "Friends of Horace Dinner," open to all interested, and attended by representatives of the three organizations. Here copies of *The Prize-Winning Translations of Horatian Odes* (New York; Silver, Burdett and Company, 1935) were distributed, containing the best versions submitted in the national collegiate and high-school contests; announcement was made by Professor Dorothy Robathan of Wellesley College of the winner of the thousand-dollar travel-purse Horatian contest. The dinner was followed by a joint assembly, presided over by Professor Louis E. Lord of Oberlin College, president of the Archaeological Institute. At this meeting Professor Berthold Louis Ullman of the University of Chicago delivered his presidential address as head of the Philological Association on "Horace and the Philologists."

On December 27 there were individual morning and afternoon sessions, but in the evening the three societies united for the Annual Dinner, with Professor Ullman presiding. Four ten-minute toasts were followed by an illustrated lecture on "The University of Cincinnati Excavations at Troy," given by Professor Carl W. Blegen of the University of Cincinnati.

On the morning of December 28 there were again separate meetings; in the afternoon the Philological Association and the Linguistic Society met jointly, the program including the presidential address of the head of the Linguistic Society, Professor Leonard Bloomfield of the University of Chicago. The Archaeological Institute assembled in an individual meeting. All sessions of the three organizations concluded with the afternoon's meetings, and thus the visitors were left a free evening for the New York theatre or cinema.

One hundred and two papers in all were read during the course of the joint convention, apart from some thirty-three additional papers announced by title. The writers included scholars in all sections of the United States, with some representatives from the Dominion of Canada. The great stimulus to archaeological research in recent years was reflected in the diversity and extent of the papers presented before the Archaeological Institute. It was of interest, too, to observe the number of women scholars engaged not alone in archaeological study but in the active work of excavation.

The next convention is scheduled for the city of Chicago, where there will be a joint meeting December 28, 29, and 30, 1936.

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WILLIAM CHARLES KORFMACHER

### Horace in the Role of Eclectic (II)

Now those who think that Horace's adoption of Stoicism was a process which began about the time of the second book of *Satires*, would say that in the two books of *Epistles* the evolution had been pretty much completed, and the poet was well on the way to qualifying for admission into the select circles of the Stoic sages. Let us see.

In the first *Epistle* to Maecenas he discusses his own state of mind in this fashion:

Now I have a spell of great activity, and become immersed in political affairs, true Virtue's staunch defender and disciple; now surreptitiously I slip back to the precepts of Aristippus, and endeavour to accommodate the world to myself—not myself to the world. (I. 1. 16-19.)

That the former state was ever more than mental, I do not believe; as far as I know there is no record that Horace in the last period of his life ever plunged into the tide of civil life as the strong defender and disciple of true Virtue; there is rather more evidence for the latter condition. Campbell thinks that the fact that he refers to his Cyrenaic moments as a slipping back, argues that his usual condition is now one of adherence to Stoicism. To me the "slipping back" sounds much more as though he is an Epicurean most of the time, with intervals in which he feels like preaching sermons,—impulses indulged in lofty flights of philosophic fancy. There is quite a bit of moralizing in this *Epistle*, however, with such border-line observations as, "It is the beginning of virtue to flee vice, and of wisdom to get rid of folly" (I. 1. 41, 42), and "Let this be our wall of bronze, to be conscious of no wrongdoing, to have no sin to cause us to grow pale" (I. 1. 60-61). He concludes by assuring us that

The sage is less than Jove alone,—for he is rich, free, honoured, fair,—a very king of kings—above all, sound,—except when troubled with the "flu." (I. 1. 106-108.)

Is this anticlimactic ending an indication he gives us that we need not take his virtuous teachings too seriously, or does he mean to imply that in adversity (a time when his philosophy should be of use to him) the Stoic *Sapiens* is no better than the rest of men?

In *Epistle* II he seems to be impressed with Epicurus' teaching that the only true pleasures are intellectual and aesthetic ones, and advises his correspondent to take up the study of philosophy. Later he remarks: "Let him desire nothing more to whose lot sufficient falls" (I. 2. 46). Ceasing to be covetous when to your lot "sufficient falls" is no virtue at all, the Stoic would say. The thing to do is not to be covetous in the first place. We find also the oft-repeated theme of Epicurean moderation recurring once more in quite an obvious passage:

Spurn pleasures; pleasure bought at the price of pain is only harmful. The avaricious man is always in want; set a definite limit to your desire. (I. 2. 56.)

He writes to his friend Albius, in *Epistle* IV, in this fashion:

From the gods you have received beauty, wealth, and the art of enjoyment. Is there anything more that

a devoted nurse could desire for her sweet charge, if he could think rightly and express his thoughts,—if he were richly endowed with favour, fame, and health, together with a decent living and an unfailing purse? In the midst of hope and anxiety, of fear and anger,—believe that every day that has dawned is the last you will live; thus—welcome will arrive the hour for which you had not hoped; and as for me, you will find me stout and sleek and in excellent condition, when you wish to laugh at a pig from Epicurus' herd. (I. 4. 7-16.)

This passage hardly requires comment. Wealth, beauty, favor, fame, the art of enjoyment, a seemly living, and a never-failing purse,—a confirmed Stoic should not be extolling these, but then he claims to be a creature quite different from a confirmed Stoic.

He invites a friend to supper in *Epistle* V with the following easy exhortation:

Have done with airy hopes, and the struggle for wealth . . . Tomorrow . . . will offer indulgence to late-sleepers; with impunity may we prolong the summer night with pleasant conversation. (I. 5. 8, 10, 11.)

In a similarly light vein, he continues:

What good is my fortune to me, if I may not make use of it . . . I will begin to carouse and to scatter flowers,—and will let you think me indiscreet if you will. What reserve does not the flowing bowl break down? The brimming wine-cup . . . whom has it not made free, though in the grasp of penury? (I. 5. 12, 14-16, 19, 20.)

It seems that we have here a new sort of Stoic *Sapiens*, whose apathy expresses itself in drinking, scattering flowers, and singing the praises of the wine-cup! Indeed, it is neither virtue nor wisdom that makes men free, but the *wine-bowl*. Will wonders never cease?

The burden of his song in *Epistle* VI is the admonition to cultivate an indifferent spirit, and serenity of soul, by refusing to be concerned about material possessions. Carry nothing,—not even virtue,—to excess. Shades of Epicurus! *Epistles* X, XI, and XII are developed in very much the same way. In *Epistle* XII, for instance, he ingenuously informs us that,

If haply you abstain from what is at hand, and limit your diet to nettles and other greens, you will not change your way of life, even though you were flooded with gold from the clear stream of Fortune. (I. 12. 7-9.)

Now this is lovely advice, but again we have no record of his ever deciding to live on nettles. Has he forgotten the wine-cup and the flowing bowl so soon?

*Epistle* XV is written to his friend Vala and asks for information concerning the luxuries and comforts which the various watering-places can afford. He knows this solicitude for comfort is inconsistent with some of his other Spartan pronouncements; so he says,

To be truthful, this is the sort of man I am—When means are lacking, I am loud in the praise of a safe and humble lot, and I am brave enough in such poor surroundings; but really, when something better and more elegant comes along, I, the very same man, declare that they only know how to live well, who, like you, have invested their money in luxurious villas, that make a great show. (I. 15. 42-46.)

That is at least an interesting bit of self-analysis.

The sixteenth *Epistle* in this book he begins by praising his Sabine estate to his friend Quinctius. He describes the scenery beautifully, and ends thus:



The fountain, too, is fit to give its name to the stream, and is of such a kind that the Hebrus winding through Thrace is not more cool nor pure; its flowing waters, moreover, heal both headache and indigestion. This nook, so pleasant—believe me, even bewitching—keeps me sound and healthy during the hot September season. (I. 16. 12-16.)

Then he turns to a consideration of his friend, and hurls at the poor fellow a whole barrage of real Stoic advice. He praises virtue for virtue's sake, and condemns those who are good merely in order to avoid detection. No possessions but virtue are goods. But all this rugged counsel to self-denial is in marked contrast with the first part of the poem, in which he becomes enthusiastic over his own comfortable situation. Bewitching estates, obviously, ought not to allure his friend, upon whom he urges rather the example of Dionysus, who was not troubled in the least when Pentheus, lord of Thebes, threatened to take away his cattle, substance, couches and plates. Has he one code for his associates and another for himself?

Finally, if we cherished a lingering doubt that perhaps in his latter days, Horace really turned Stoic, *Epistle XVII* would quickly dispel it. In this piece he refers more explicitly than in any other to definite philosophers. He does not speak through another man, but presents his comments as his own opinions. Moreover, he speaks as though sincerely convinced, and the occasion lends itself to a truthful exposition of his real views, since he is offering advice to a young and comparatively inexperienced friend, whom he intends to direct in the beginning of a study of philosophy. His words are self-explanatory, and in my opinion, their importance cannot well be overestimated. The ancient conflict between Cynic and Cyrenaic, in which the Cyrenaic comes out ahead, he summarizes by quoting the famous dialogue between Diogenes and Aristippus:

If Aristippus could but content himself to dine on vegetables (said Diogenes), he would disdain to consort with princes.

If my critic (retorts Aristippus) knew how to associate with princes, he would scorn vegetables. (I. 17. 13-15.)

Then in unmistakable terms, he gives his own reaction, and definitely declares his admiration for the way of life of Aristippus.

Tell me whose words and deeds—of these two wise men—meet with your approval, or, as you are the younger, hear why the theory of Aristippus is to be approved. Any form of life, any rank and station, became Aristippus, who was generally resigned to his present lot, even though he aimed at better things. On the other hand, I should be very much surprised if the opposite way of life suited him whom endurance covers with double rags. The one will not wait for purple clothing; dressed in any sort of garment he will stroll through the most crowded avenues, and with no lack of grace will play either role. The other will spurn a cloak woven at Miletus as though it were worse than dog or snake, and will freeze to death if you do not restore his rags. Give them to him, and let the fool live on. (I. 17. 23-32.)

This unqualified expression of approval of the Cyrenaic, and of disgust and impatience with the uncouth Stoic, seems to me conclusive. I do not think it necessary to look any further.

My last quotation,—and it is from one of the last of his works,—*Epistle II* in Book II,—is, I think, appropriate in conclusion. He says

But now that I possess a competency, what doses of hemlock could ever make my wits sufficiently clear, if I did not consider slumber far preferable to scribbling verses? (II. 2. 52-54.)

So also, it is necessary to scribble no further criticisms. I have tried to present Horace's mode of thought adequately and fairly. As often as possible, I have let him explain his own position in his own words.

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### Homeric Man's Dependence on the Gods

A careful reading of the *Iliad* reveals that Homeric man had a lively sense of dependence on the gods and that he expressed it in all possible human ways. This sense of dependence included all that affected his exterior and interior life, his successes and his failures, his happiness and his misery, his existence and his death, even his intimate thoughts and desires. He deemed himself dependent not only as an individual, but also as a member of the social units of family and state.

All pervading and all inclusive as this sense of dependence on the higher powers was, it would perhaps be too much to say that it was the source of Homeric man's whole moral life. At all events, notable classical scholars, like W. Nestle and others, deny all connection between Homeric man's morality and his recognition of the gods. But there are clear, if few, traces in the *Iliad*, not to mention the *Odyssey*, of such an interrelation. Note, for instance, how the aged Phoenix urges Achilles to relent in the touching passage about the *Litai*, daughters of Zeus: "Prayers of sorrow and repentance are daughters of great Zeus. . . Now, whoever reverences Zeus' daughters when they come near, him they bless abundantly and hear his petitions; but when he denies them and stiffly refuses, they then go and beg Zeus, son of Kronos, that sin (*Ate*) may come on such a one, that he may fall and pay the price. Achilles, see to it that there attend upon the daughters of Zeus the reverence that bendeth the hearts of right-minded men" (IX 502 ff.). Here Homeric man's realization that his life is subject to the gods prompted forgiveness of injuries and kindness towards offenders.

Achilles' rejection of this plea turns the hearts even of his admirers against him. Yet eventually even he forgives and makes generous amends by securing due burial rites for the very slayer of his bosom friend, because of his deep reverence for the will of Zeus: "If verily with full purpose of heart, the Olympian himself so biddeth . . . So let it be; whoso bringeth ransom, let him carry away the dead" (XXIV 139 ff.).

Again, Hector, realizing that his death at Achilles' hands was certain, was able to accept that death with calmness, because he recognized it as the will of Zeus: "Ah me! in very truth have the gods called me to my death . . . So methinks from of old was it the good

pleasure of Zeus and of the son of Zeus, the god who smites afar; they in former times helped me with ready hearts" (XXII 297 ff.). So again Achilles tried to comfort old Priam and himself by the reflection that all ills come from the gods:

Our sorrows will we suffer to lie quiet in our hearts,  
despite our pain . . . for in this wise have the gods  
spun the thread for wretched mortals that they should  
live in pain . . . bear thou up. (XXIV 523 ff.)

In the well-known passage in XXII, Achilles says, before he slew Hector (270-1): "No more shall there be any escape for you: *Pallas Athene* shall lay you low by my spear." After the event he again refers his success to the gods: ". . . since the gods granted us to slay this man" (379). Similarly, Agamemnon reminds Achilles that "the gods that are forever made him a powerful warrior" (I 290). Now, one need not, of course, go so far as to credit Achilles and Agamemnon with a sense of profound humility; but yet, negatively at any rate, we may say that their sense of dependence on the gods checked overweening pride in time of success and victory. Achilles' expression surely seems to imply that his recognition of the fact that he vanquished his foe by the help of the gods did not allow boastfulness to enter his soul. This is something; it is, in fact, a great deal, when we remember that boastfulness was so common a trait of the typical Homeric hero that he hardly considered it a fault. For such a one to refer his success to the gods should, I think, count for very much.

Obedience to and dependence on Zeus fostered submission to all lawful authority. Nestor urged Achilles to yield to Agamemnon because the latter is "a sceptre-bearing king, to whom Zeus gives glory" (I 279). The profound reverence for judges and their decisions can be gleaned from the circumstance that Achilles' oath (I 233-244) was deemed most sacredly inviolable, because he swears by that sceptre which

the sons of the Achaeans, they that are the dispensers  
of justice and guardians of the laws on behalf of  
Zeus, bear in their hands. (I 237-239.)

Odysseus' final argument to restrain the chieftains from sailing homeward is that Zeus-nurtured kings "have their honor from Zeus, and Zeus, the counsellor, loves them" (II 197), and he reminds the common soldier that the king is to be obeyed, "since to him Zeus gave the sceptre and judgments, that he may provide for his people" (II 205 f.).

This sense of dependence and the conviction that there is a divine sanction for justice, inclined Homeric man to pray for the dominance of right and not might, even though the issue should involve serious personal loss. At the duel between Menelaus and Paris, which was to decide the war, the common soldier, both Greek and Trojan, prayed, not that his champion should win, but—

Father Zeus, thou that rulest from Ida, greatest  
most glorious, grant that whosoever of these two  
brought these doings upon both peoples, die and enter  
within the house of Hades. (III 320-322.)

Reverence for this divine sanction secured fidelity to solemn promises, without which civilized life would have soon become impossible. This may be seen in the mutual trust of Greeks and Trojans in the solemn oath by which they bound themselves to decide the issue of the war through the outcome of the duel between Menelaus and Paris. It is equally clear in the violation of the truce by the treacherous arrow of Pandarus: the gods, Agamemnon avers, will punish it by absolute defeat.

Even if the Olympian does not accomplish it at once, he is sure to do it, late though it be . . . Well know I in heart and soul, the day shall come when sacred Ilium shall come to ruin, and Priam and the people of Priam. (IV 160-165.)

Trust in the providence of the gods makes the final parting of Andromache and Hector the perennial inspiration of generation after generation. The calm resignation to the divine will, the hopeful, heartfelt prayer for Astyanax strike an answering chord in every human breast:

Dear wife, grieve not overmuch at heart; no one shall send me forth to Hades beyond my fate. (VI, 486 f.) O Zeus and ye other gods, grant that this my son be, even as I, outstanding among the Trojans . . . and may his mother be glad at heart. (VI 476-481.)

For a crime against his father the curse of the gods keeps Phoenix an exile from home and country,—homeless and childless (IX 453-457; 493 f.). Regard for the divine protection of suppliants impels Achilles to take extreme precautions against losing his temper:

Old man, provoke me no more in my sorrows, lest I leave not even thee, suppliant though thou art, in peace in my hut, and thus *sin against* the commands of Zeus. (XXIV 568-570.)

To such heroic self-mastery does this reverence for the will of Zeus bring him, that he orders the body of the hated slayer of his bosom friend Patroclus, which he had so shamefully mistreated for days, to be carefully washed and anointed, and himself lifts it with his own hands and sets it upon the bier away from Priam's sight—"lest at the sight of his son, Priam restrain not his anger, and he (Achilles) be stirred to wrath, and slay him, and thus sin against the commands of Zeus" (XXIV, 584 f.).

Achilles does even more. In his first outburst of rage, he had rejected every thought of due burial for Hector; now, in his change of heart, he himself suggests full burial rites and pledges every assistance in having them duly carried out.

It appears, therefore, that, if Homeric man's sense of dependence on the gods and reverence for their will, was not perhaps the source and the inspiration of all the morality he possessed, it certainly inspired him on occasion to make an earnest effort to live up to the dictates of his conscience. In view of the examples quoted above, it is impossible, with Nestle and others, flatly to deny all connection between Homeric religion and Homeric morality.

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